SOUTH VIET NAM In Struggle

7th Year — January 1, 1973

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Address: HT 1217 B-SVN
c/o DAZIMINA HANOI
19, Hai Ba Trung, Hanoi, DRVN
and all RSVN Embassies, Information Bureaux in foreign countries

CENTRAL ORGAN OF THE SOUTH VIET NAM NATIONAL FRONT FOR LIBERATION

Enemy base Dau Mau (Quang Tri) overrun

(by Doan Cong Tinh—Medal prized photo at the Sofia International Films Exhibition)

OUR RESOLVE GROWS IN PROPORTION TO OUR SUCCESSES

(page 9)

Back from ten hells on earth

"I'VE gone through 10 US-Thieu jails. I'll try to tell you all that I was an eye-witness to in the last three years in those 10 hells on earth."

It took the physician a great effort to keep his voice calm. While receiving me, he had to remain lying as he was still very sick from his stay in US-Thieu prisons. He requested me to jot down his story.

ON December 25, 1969, the Quang Ngai provincial police sent me to the Central Police Headquarters to my great surprise as I was only a physician at the Quang Ngai hospital and was following the evolution of a case of chemical poisoning. I had not succeeded in finding out any treatment nor reached any conclusion on the effects of toxic chemicals on my patient. Now all of a sudden, I was summoned to the Central Police Headquarters.

Once there, I was taken in charge by a police agent who also looked after my "living conditions." He gave me this explanation: "You have been asked to come here to have a rest, improve your health and then give your opinion on certain matters."

He led me to P42, a kind of secret cell for prisoners. There were all kinds of detainees in P42: political and "economic" prisoners, blackmailers, etc. and even people on the Thieu side.

During my three month's stay there, I enjoyed "freedom" that is to say I was not put to torture, was free to go out during working hours on Sundays, Wednesdays and Fridays, free to read newspapers and to write statements.

Every three days, I had to report to the "interrogation room" to be told pieces of evidence claimed by the Central Police to be related to the Viet Cong. What was most horrifying was the torture sessions which I was compelled to attend even when I feigned illness.

Each day brought at least 200 inmates to the Central Police jails. The number of released was 10 per day at the most. The detainees came from all walks of life: intellectuals, students and pupils, priests, ordinary civilians, oldagers, children, pregnant women, women with babies in arms, etc. No matter who he was, any new comer to the Central Police Headquarters was put to savage torture. Such slogans as "Wipe out the Viet Cong," "Confess means to live," "Not to confess means to die," "Beat the innocent till they say *yes*," "Beat him who refuses to acknowledge his crime into acknowledging them" were seen hanging in the torture room, the "interrogation room" and painted on torture instruments such as bludgeons, handcuffs, sticks, three-ridge rulers, etc.

Many kinds of torture instruments bore the inscription "made in USA." Hai Xuyen from Tay Ninh, Ngo Van Thach from Saigon, Nguyen Van Tam from Da Nang etc. were flogged with rubber-covered steel bludgeons which bruised their bodies for months and removed whole parts of their skin and hair.

There was a mask specifically devised for use during the torture sessions. This two-part mask wholly hid the face and had holes for the nose, eyes and mouth. The two parts were applied against the prisoners' face and screwed against his temples. The tighter they were screwed, the more they pressed on the prisoner's flesh and skin which protruded through the holes, and the eyeballs soon became two lumps of flesh as big as the tubes of a field-glass.

Bay Niem from Sadec was put to these kinds of torture for nearly one month, first the "mask" then the "stool." If his toes found enough room on the narrow stool, his heel would not, and vice versa. He had to squat down this way for 25 days and nights on end. When the torture ended, he lost his sense of equilibrium. Then he was thrown into a completely silent room whose four walls and ceiling were continually oozing moisture. Salt was put on the ceiling and trickled down the walls. Every five minutes, jailers would bang on the door to prevent Bay Niem from sleeping. Exhausted, he died on the 29th day.

On February 28, 1971, I was forced to witness for two consecutive days and nights the indignities wreaked on a woman from Thu Duc.

Hardly had the Central Police Headquarters' lugubrious tocsin ceased ringing when a woman, about 28, all in rags, was pushed into the room. She was rather thin and her face was totally bruised. 8 sturdy torturers were standing in two rows in the room about 9 square-yards wide, fully equipped with torture instruments: bottles, sticks, bludgeons, guns, electric generators, masks, pincers, nails, etc. She was pushed into the centre of the room and stripped naked. Six torturers held tight her hands and feet while two others introduced into her genitals a whole panoply of bottles big and small, then a large and thorny piece of firewood. When she fainted, they clapped their hands, drank alcohol, smoked cigarettes and shouted: "A direct hit!"

The second time, the torturers put her to the "light" trick. She was ordered to stand at a distance of about 3 feet from a wall with both hands leaning on it and two lights of 500 watts each, placed at 8 inches from her. The lights were suddenly switched on. She had to stand in this way for four hours on end. As she swooned, they poured dirty water mixed with lime, soap... into her mouth until her belly swelled. Eight torturers then jumped on her and the water gushed out. She again fainted. They had a drinking bout and discussed new brutalities.

The third time — it was past midnight — as I was nodding, I was awakened by a loud cry. I saw the torturers holding her hands while one of them thrust half an inch long nails one by one into her fingers and toes. After an hour, she was made to squat down on a small and very high stool placed in the centre of the room. They walked while drinking alcohol, around her and questioned her. At times, they struck hard on her head with a bludgeon. As she could not remain sitting in such an awkward position for a longer time, she tumbled down on the ground. They called a medical worker to remove the nails one by one: blood mixed with water spilled all over the room and filled it with a nauseating stench.

On the second day, she was dipped into a water tank. As I had myself a fit of fever, they returned me to P42. I learned that by the end of that second day the woman died.

IN this jail at the Central Police Headquarters inanimate objects as nails, pincers, needles, timbers, ropes, hooks, electric wire, bathing tubs, bottles, rulers... were all turned into horrible torture instruments. A tin tank for example could be used as an instrument for a most excruciating kind of torture. It was not only used to make a prisoner suffocate or to have his belly swollen with water. It was not only a thing for the prisoner to sit in while from without a hammer knocked at regular intervals on its walls to inflict on the victim an atrocious pain in his head. This would require much time and the goalers rather lacked patience. A new method was therefore invented by them — a most inhumane and fiendish one: the prisoner was compelled to sit inside the tank, and a water tap dripped on his head for hours. The prisoner might be driven out of his senses by such a treatment.

Every night awful noises came to my ears: hoarse cries of prisoners, dull sounds of flogging, of corpses falling on the cement floor, strident interrupted howls of a prisoner being beheaded, spurting of blood which fell drop by drop...

The cells at this General Police Headquarters were built with US money and after US designs, so they were one hundred per cent American: 4 feet x 4 feet, a man of medium height, lying crosswise would be unable to stretch his legs. Their doors opened on the West, and were made of 2-inch thick iron plates so from 11 a.m. to 2-3 p.m., they were heated by the sun which turned the rooms into furnaces. On the threshold was a gutter for urination and on the south-eastern side was a WC: the smell of urine and excrements polluted the air all the day long. There was always a big crowd in the cells, and diseases were rampant. On the night of March 2, 1970 alone, 15 prisoners died of cholera.

Water was nearly non-existent, and not a few prisoners had no bath for a whole year. Fleas, bugs, mosquitoes, flies... were teeming in the cells.

Food was distributed the way the warders thought fit: sometimes two meals a day, sometimes none, sometimes they were served very early in the morning, but sometimes only at midnight. Rice was usually mixed with dust and chaff. The staple dish was rotten fish sauce and there was not enough of it at that. Clothes could not be washed for several continuous months, owing to shortage of water. As a result of the tortures, all the inmates' clothing was reduced to rags soiled by blood which stained also their faces and bodies.

During my stay at the Central Police Headquarters I still enjoyed some "freedom," but morally I was no less tormented than those victims of physical tortures. Though I was not put to none of these, I was racked by great agonies especially when I was forced to watch other prisoners being brutalized. After each torture session, I could neither sleep nor eat. As I fell asleep out of exhaustion, horrific scenes of torture again appeared in my mind which kept me awake the rest of the night. As a result my health quickly declined. After three months' stay at the Central Police Headquarters, my hair turned completely white, my eyes were dimmed and my nerves grew tense, sometimes I felt as if I were mad and could remember nothing.

The Central Police authorities were extremely crafty people. Whenever they saw a rise in the movement against the repression of patriots, they would not fail to shift "political" prisoners (including intellectuals and religious people) to the category of "economic" prisoners. Whenever the movement receded, they would jail them separately and torture them.

As a physician, I was deeply upset by such scenes. I was 56 and had been a doctor for 36 years, and now I was condemned to live such a wretched life! They purposely parted me from my family and the rest of society. They would not allow my wife and children to visit me. The latter's letters were intercepted and their parcels stolen.

I tried to get out of this hell by sending a request to higher authorities, because it was my only choice. But my request remained unanswered. Then on March 25, 1970, Captain Nguyen Van Hai summoned me and casually said to me: "You have connections with the Viet Cong. We did not torture you, but kept you here to witness our actions and draw your own conclusions. But during your stay here, you've made no progress, so now we have decided to transfer you to the Tan Hiep reeducation centre for some time. Tomorrow we'll send you to that place."

N.V.H.

1972

Highly successful offensives and uprisings in South Viet Nam

Collapse of "Vietnamization"

At a time when the US and the Saigon regime was boasting of the successes of their "Vietnamization" and selling the Nixon doctrine, the devastating wave of strategic offensives and uprisings of the South Viet Nam liberation forces and people broke out in the last days of March.

It was the biggest, most violent, most continual and most sustained series of assaults of the South Vietnamese patriots which caught the enemy completely off guard, upset all their wild calculations and forced them into a passive posture right from the outset and on all battlefields, and inflicted another disastrous failure on their "Vietnamization."

On March 30, 1972, the armed forces and people of South Viet Nam, from Quang Tri, the Central Highlands, Eastern Nam Bo, the plains of Central Trung Bo and Nam Bo, swang into action on all battlefields. Through large-scale combined operations by various arms on different theatres of strategic importance, the Liberation Army at one stroke shattered the strongest defence lines of the enemy, wiped out or disbanded many adverse regiments, brigades, multi-battalion task force units and divisions and strongest defence groups. Many basic defence sectors of the enemy were quickly overrun.

The key battles and the dramatic gains of the main force units of the Liberation Army in Dong Ha, Quang Tri, Dak To, Tan Canh, Loc Ninh, Hon Quan (An Loc), made a decisive contribution to the obliteration of three strongest defence lines which had taken the US and Saigon regime many years of exertions to set up. For the first time in the history of the war, the Liberation Army blotted out at once many defence lines of the enemy on different theatres of operation. Also for the first time it wiped out or disbanded many divisions and regiments of the Saigon army. This has accelerated the Saigon army's decline and deprived it of the capacity of confronting their opponents on many battlefronts at the same time.

Also in this period, the armed forces and people of various localities, in close co-ordination with the regular liberation army, stepped up their crushing attacks and uprisings.

Futile "re-Americanization" of the war

In face of the imminent complete failure of "Vietnamization," by the middle of April, especially from May 8, 1972, the Nixon administration hastily "re-Americanized" the war, by deploying US air and naval forces on an unprecedented scale, in ferocious bombings of the South and the resumed savage air war against North Viet Nam.

In co-ordination with the mounting tide of offensives and uprisings of the South Viet Nam Liberation Forces and people, the armed forces and people of North Viet Nam inflicted heavy losses on the US Air Force and Navy by shooting down many US planes, and setting ablaze many US warships. Against overwhelming odds the North Vietnamese kept the flow of aid streaming to the great front of the South.

Our armed forces and people have kept the initiative of action, staunchly stuck to the newly-liberated territories, repeatedly foiled the major counter-attacks of the enemy and closed in on the adversary's inner defence perimeters, directly threatening his sanctuaries.

While the regular army of the quislings was scattered thinly to cope with PLAF widespread attacks and took a heavy beating on all battlefields, the people's war continued to develop vigorously.

Recently, the dramatic assaults on the air bases in Da Nang, Bien Hoa, Tan Son Nhut and strategic reserve storage areas like Long Binh, Thanh Tuy Ha and Nha Be which resulted in hundreds of aircraft and military vehicles destroyed and tens of thousands of tons of ordnance and fuel burnt out, have further aggravated the predicament of the enemy.

The powerful blows at the rear of the enemy provided an effective support for the political struggle of the people in enemy-held areas. Millions of people stood up and resolutely militated for peace and democracy and against US-Saigon fascist measures.

The areas subjected to the most brutal control of the enemy during the past three years were the scenes of the most ebullient uprisings of the masses. There our army and people erased many military subsectors and district towns defended by whole regiments of Saigon regulars. Hundreds of "civil guard" companies and thousands of "people self-defence" platoons were knocked out and most of the "civilian defence" units were disbanded. Thousands of military posts were either encircled, overrun, forced to withdraw or to surrender. Millions of people have regained control over their villages and are striving to build and consolidate their revolutionary power, develop the people's armed forces, build fortified villages and hamlets to resist the enemy's inroads and ultimately to foil US-Saigon "rural pacification" schemes.

Agitation and persuasion work among the Saigon troops has been intensified in diversified forms, and has given a fresh push to the disintegration of the enemy ranks. Many big units of the Saigon army have refused combat orders or gone over to the Liberation Army!

An unusually fruitful year

According to still incomplete figures, the South Viet Nam liberation armed forces and people put out of combat nearly half a million Saigon troops. They wrote off or depleted 8 divisions, 35 regiments, brigades and multi-battalion units, 327 battalions of infantry and technical units, wiped out 750 companies and 1,850 platoons of "civil guards" and "people self-defence" and disbanded most of the "civilian defence" outfits, captured or destroyed a big amount of war equipment consisting of 11,000 military vehicles (including 2,850 tanks and armoured cars), 1,5000 guns, 45,000 assorted guns and hundreds of thousands of tons of ordnance and fuel, shot down or destroyed 2,5000 aircraft of different kinds, sank 400 warships and combat launches, burnt down 650 storages of fuel, ammo and war materials, liberated many vast areas in both the mountain regions and the plains.

The Liberation Army main forces' vigorous onsets hit hard at the Saigon army, backbone of Vietnamization, wiping out or decimating its major units making up more than half of its divisions, nearly 70% of its regiments and brigades, smashing the adversary's strongest defence lines, and liberating many vast and important areas. Together with the people, the people's liberation armed forces held their ground, continued to destroy an important force of the enemy during the latter's very counter-attacks, frustrated their scheme to encroach on the liberated areas in many important theatres of operations, and made the liberated zone secure.

— Closely combining military actions with political demonstrations and persuasion work among enemy troops, our army and people played havoc among adverse coercive forces in various localities, liberated many district towns and military subsectors and swept away whole clusters of "strategic hamlets" and numerous military posts, seriously jeopardizing the pacification program, basis of "Vietmamization," and opening many new and very important areas of operations right in the areas rated "pacified" by the enemy.

— In spite of their "re-Americanization," the enemy have failed to check the collapse of "Vietnamization."

— Never before has our position been so strong as today. In the past year the people's armed forces of South Viet Nam fought very courageously, persistently and successfully in all weather conditions and thereby gave a clear proof of their extraordinary all-round progress. A momentous turning point has been reached and has opened up prospects for important changes in the balance of forces between us and the enemy and a new juncture very favourable for our anti-US resistance for national salvation.

Military vehicles abandoned by Saigon troops in their rout from Loc Ninh

Downing of 732 aircraft and wipeout or capture of over 1,000 pilots and crewmen in North Viet Nam

The armed forces and people of North Viet Nam this year have won very great victories by downing 732 aircraft among them 54 B.52's and 10 F.111's, and wiping out or capturing over 1,000 pilots and crewmen of the US.

In addition they have shot afire or heavily damaged US warships on 117 occasions.

Early in April the Nixon administration, betraying the commitment made in Oct. 1968, renewed, in an utterly savage manner, the US war of destruction against North Viet Nam.

The US imperialists deployed a huge force of aircraft including over 1,400 tactical aircraft and 200 strategic bombers, and over 60 warships of different kinds in the firebombing of both North and South Viet Nam and the mining of the sea ports and river-mouths of the DRVN.

Most serious has been the fact that on the night of Dec. 18 the Nixon administration started using a huge air force comprising hundreds of B.52's in wanton bombing attacks on Hanoi and Haiphong and many other population centres.

Matching their strength against that of the US for a whole year, the armed forces and people of North Viet Nam have shot down 732 aircraft among then 54 B.52's and 10 F.111's, and wiped out or captured over 1,000 pilots and crewmen ranging from company to field officers.

A particularly important point is that North Viet Nam has shattered many modern kinds of US aircraft. Improved F.4's have been massively used but have been shot down in great numbers — over 400 so far. F.111's, the most up-to-date kind of fighter-bombers, have been introduced only to be downed in a greater number than in the initial air war. Stung to the quick, the Nixon administration have thrown in even strategic bombers, but the number of such aircraft downed in the past 8 months was 9 times greater than that of the Johnson war. Many of them have been brought down on the spot, and a great number of their pilots and crewmen captured.

The aggressors have also taken advantage of darkness to mount their attacks. But it is at night that close to 100 of their strategic and tactical aircraft have met their doom.

Besides, US cruisers and destroyers have been shot afire or damaged 117 times, which almost equals the figure for all the four years under LBJ.

Most recently, during the Dec. 18-29 period, the armed forces and people of North Viet Nam knocked down 81 US aircraft including 34 strategic bombers mostly of the B.52 D and B.52 G types, 5 F.111's, 27 aircraft of the tactical air force, 11 modern jets of the USN, 3 reconnaissance planes, and a helicopter.

In addition, hundreds of US pilots and crewmen ranging from company to field officers were wiped out or taken prisoner, and warships were set on fire.

B.52 stratofort, "USAF power's symbol" burst into flames in the Hanoi sky

HANOI'S BATTLE SUCCESSES

MIDNIGHT December 26. A storm of anger rose up in the skies of Hanoi. Like shooting stars, coveys of SAM's whizzed skyward. Anti-aircraft gunners defending the capital threw up their deadly and accurate fire. With naked eyes, people could see the super-bombers of the US war maniacs burst into flames over the West Lake and the Lake of the Restored Sword, and a myriad of fire balls and torches plummeting downward. Inside the city, it was a tumultuous hunt for downed fliers. Now and then, a police van on patrol drove past. Some ambulance cars sped back to hospital or towards bombed sites. Guard teams or groups of red-armbanded youths paced along the street pavements. Feet pounded the ground, and came running, rescue teams equipped with picks, shovels and iron bars. Pedicab drivers, wearing red arm bands, quickly joined these teams. At the entrance of a public air-raid shelter, several families whose house had just been levelled by US bombs settled tempos rarily for the night. Some people were spreading their mats, others carrying babies wrapped in blankets. The sight of a young mother stroking her child's blanket to lull her into sleep and the hearing of the encouraging words from a husband to his wife, made us feel sick at heart, and roused us to stronger anger. The criminals shall never get away unpunished. We drove through a major street. Behind the windows of the Exhibition Hall, wreckages of B-52's and F-111's appeared in a flash. Next to a row of bomb-ravaged houses, pictures of American airmen captured since the night of December 18 were on display. There were dozens of them, those who carried lethal bombs to this city. What they looked like, the downed air marauders we were going to interview in a few moments, we did not know. But one thing was certain: Their crimes were one and the same.

In a courtyard in the heart of Hanoi, reporters, news photographers and film cameramen gathered around a tree, waiting. A motorcycle with a sidecar brought in a US pilot captured inside the city. The bald-headed captive occupied all room in the sidecar.

After the first US captive had been handed over to the camp authorities, the motocycle was back in the courtyard, ready for another trip. Moments later, a similar vehicle rolled in to give in charge a brown-haired youthful looking man. He was wounded in his right arm. With the permission of military authorities, newsmen asked him a few questions, and he was quick to answer. He said he was shot down while manning a B-52. He was the first to bail out. His aircraft was struck by one of our SAM's. It was his first mission over Hanoi. He was shot down before he could release the bomb load, he said.

He was then driven away to the detention camp. The streets were deserted. A B-52D has a 6-man crew. Some had lost their lives, others had been captured and might be on their way to the stockade. When the captured airman's sidecar approached the gate of the camp, from the opposite direction came two young women, riding their bicycles. They carried along bags of rice, blankets, mosquito nets and clothes. A little child sat on a small rattan chair fixed between the handle bar and saddle. Maybe it was an avacuation party. In the electric light, the two women could notice him and hardly had they exclaimed "an air pirate!" when the motorbicycle moved past. The gate of the camp clinked open.

IN another overnight B-52 extermination raid on many city districts and suburban villages, the US aggressors had received still heavier punishment. The call signal of the Hanoi broadcasting station was played immediately after the battle was over. Tonight, the voice of the female announcer sounded fully authoritative. Hanoi was ravaged. But never before had it a clearer realization of the vast strength demonstrating its combat will and its firm confidence in victory than at this moment.

We climbed up an observation tower in the city. From there, we could still see the fires kindled by enemy bombs at Co Loa, Gia Lam, and Duoi Ca, in Kham Thien street, and even close to the Unity

HANOI — DIEN BIEN PHU

Hereunder are poet **Huy Can***'s notes published by the daily* Nhan Dan. *The poet stays in Hanoi during all the time of US bombings*—Ed.

Where the magic cross-bow was planted in ancient times

It was not a house of thick stone walls and there was no fortification of any kind about. The C.P. was simply situated on a stretch of green grass with just a few fox-holes here and there and amidst the fields of Uy No village on the outskirts of Hanoi, the site of the magic cross-bow of King An Duong Vuong in ancient times. The main reason for it to be there, perhaps, was that the place was the centre of the four hamlets. On the night of December 18, 1972, B-52s dumped their lethal loads of explosive on these hamlets, and members of the village Party Committee—as planned—hurriedly converged on that spot of green grass.

And from there they directed the fight of the militia. From there they headed for the various hamlets and production teams to the rescue of victims buried in caved-in shelters and evacuate the other villagers after the first wave of bombing. And it was there that hamlet cadres rushed in to make their reports and receive instructions.

That night, the evacuation job was done systematically, phase after phase, like a real military operation. It was a true battle, a swift and courageous one, and the master-mind was the village Party committee giving command from a wind-swept grass field.

A name worthy of these days of glory

An Duong, a working-class quarter nestling against the Yen Phu dyke along the Red River. Like its namesake in the port city of Haiphong, it also came under B-52 carpet-bombing. The place was inhabited by workers, members of handicraft cooperatives, nursery mistresses, and infant-school teachers. A working-class community, as new as its houses, a small society warm with human love, with the hum of homely yarns among neighbours, with children's laughter and singing in moon-lit nights. A real community in a permanent festive mood.

There was a middle-aged couple who had just had a baby. The parents, their excitement and joy being too great, had hardly found a name beautiful, meaningful enough for their child when B-52's rumbled in. Afraid that the underground shelter was not strong enough to resist the aggressors' barbarity, they leant against each other to provide alive protective umbrella for their first born. The father died from a wound in the back, the mother from a head injury. But the child, still unnamed, was safe and left behind for the little community in An Duong to look after. It still has no name at this writing.

Nhan Dan Editor's note: Our readers are invited to find a name for the child. One worthy of the days we are living, and of those of the future. We propose to name him *Quyet Thang* (Resolved to win).

An initial signed without fear of breach of trust

(*Scene*: Kham Thien lane in Kham Thien street, block No. 46, Dong Da district. *Time*: the morning of December 27, 1972)

The inhabitants were salvaging their property following Nixon's raid during the night. They carried away whatever belongings were left, on their shoulders or in their arms. Bomb craters were bristling with wooden pillars and beams and littered with rubble. The street was strewn with half-burnt pages from copy-books of secondary-school children. I picked my steps carefully, following the track of other people, because the ground was thickly covered with broken glass, splintered furniture and crockery fragments. Each step was like a wound inflicted on our hearts. Not much talking was done, save brief question: "Could you show me the house of Mr. X?" "Any casualty in Mr. Y's family?" Eyes met eyes, and in these fleeting moments sorrow was shared.

A window caught my attention. On a soot-coloured leaf, words were written in white chalk with a bold hand. They said: "My family is safe. We have moved to X. street, No. 5. We trust all our belongings to the Block Security Committee. M." What confidence among neighbours! I went to a public-security agent, who was helping a family tidy up their house, and asked him if Mr. M's case was an isolated one. "No," he said, "many other families have done the same. Since they had to go in a hurry they entrusted their property to our care. Mr. M did not see us, so he left a message."

I gripped his hands in mine while pondering over the mutual trust among the men of this society. And, my thought wandered to the initial signed without fear of any breach of trust, on a soot-coloured window leaf.

Park by the side of Thuyen Quang Lake. The fires made the eyes of our observation men glow with anger.

"Incoming B-52's!"

At this brief warning, everybody swung into action. Nguyen Phu Chinh switched on his walkie-talkie. Pham Van Tin snatched the receiver. Khoi, Hai, Thang.. each at their assigned jobs. One, two, four, six... flights. Dozens of B-52's and dozens of tactical fighter-bombers roared in. SAM's were hurled up in salvoes. One hit a B-52. Its bomb load zipped earthward, so did its debris. On the ground, the city streets bore the scars of the enemy crimes. The sky seemed to be blazing with anger and the fire consumed the superbomber. Where had it fallen down? How many types of bomb had it dropped? The bomb blast snatched off their outer garments, but the observation men remained firm in their post. They scorned the biting cold and kept a close watch on the enemy. They sent very accurate reports back to the command post.

"The day is about to return. Climb down to see the wreckage of B-52's for yourselves. 4 stratoforts have biten the dust in the streets of the city and its outskirts," Tin said to us, adding, "Tell us of US crimes in detail if you visit Kham Thien and Thanh Tri."

Kham Thien, a street of about half a mile-long, had just been carpet bombed by US B-52's. The last bomb landed in the Dua Market area. City wards 40, 42, 44, 45, 46 and 47 had been blotted out. Hundreds of people had been killed or injured. This US atrocity took place right after Christmas day. No sobbing was heard. I met Nguyen Van Loc who had lost his grand mother, father, mother and younger sister. In a stern voice he told me, "The criminals will have to pay for their crimes many times over. Let's contain our grief and sorrow and look forward to our victory!"

It was daybreak when we stood looking at the body of a dead B-52 flier near a Hanoi factory devastated by US bombs. His aircraft was blown to pieces and its wreckage was found scattered on a stretch from the factory's yard to the ricefield of Village D. I was present in this same ricefield 6 months ago on June 27, 1972 to witness the end of a F-4 jet. It was also shattered to bits. One of its pilots died in the crash and the other was captured. It was the 3,700th US aircraft grounded over North Viet Nam. I brought back a fragment of it. Today, after spending a sleepless night like other Hanoians, I picked up a B-52 bit. It was the 16th B-52 downed over Hanoi.

Hanoi has always held its ground.

PHAM THANH

(*From the daily* Nhan Dan)

M. village's militia down a US jet plane with 30 *bullets*

OUR NORTHERN COUNTRYMEN HAVE DULY PUNISHED THE US AGGRESSORS

The biggest US Air Force ever mobilized

Daily deployment of a formidable US air armada:

500-700 tactical aircraft in attacks on Hanoi and Haiphong areas;

130-150 B-52 strategic planes (of the total 200 B-52s available in Southeast Asia) in carpet-bombing raids on Hanoi and Haiphong;

6,000-7,000 tons of bombs dumped on Hanoi and Haiphong areas.

In 12 days:

100,000 tons of bombs dropped mostly on Hanoi and Haiphong areas or an amount of energy released by five Hiroshima-type atomic bombs.

Kham Thien populous precinct completely destroyed by B-52s on the night of Dec. 26

The North Viet Nam army and people shot down 81 US planes, including :

34 B-52s, 5 F-IIIs, 27 modern aircraft of the US Navy, 3 electronic reconnaissance planes and one big-sized helicopter ;

Hanoi alone shot down 23 B-52s many of which crashed on the spot ;

Hundreds of US pilots and other crewmen wiped out, including several lieutenant-colonels.

Hanoi's fire-crackers welcoming the New Year · American planes shot down and blazing the capital city

TRAGICAL FIASCO OF THE US STRATEGIC AIR FORCE

On December 29, 1972, the High Command of the Viet Nam People's Army issued the following communiqué on the very signal achievement of the North Viet Nam army and people in their twelve-day confrontation with US blitz on Hanoi and Haiphong (December 18—December 29, 1972) :

ON the night of December 18, 1972, the Nixon administration took a new and extremely serious escalation. It hurled all its B-52 strategic planes based in Southeast Asia and the Pacific and hundreds of tactical planes into massive and continual large-scale attacks of unheard-of savagery against North Viet Nam, in wanton bombings of many populous areas in Hanoi, Haiphong and many provinces. The bombings caused thousands of civilian casualties, destroyed thousands of homes, many street quarters, villages, economic establishments, hospitals, schools, churches, pagodas..., piling crimes of the darkest dye against our people.

Along with its double-dealing and bad faith in negotiation, the Nixon administration, through this frenzied military adventure, hoped to cow our people into submission.

Burning with hatred for the US aggressors, the army and people of North Viet Nam fought back devastatingly. Within only twelve days and nights, they :

1. shot down 81 modern aircraft of the US strategic and tactical air forces, most of them on the spot. These included:

— 34 B-52 strategic planes, mostly of the B-52D and B-52G types equipped with ultra-modern electronic devices,

— five F-111s,

— 27 modern jet planes of the US tactical air force, 11 modern jet planes of the US Navy, and 3 reconnaissance planes and one helicopter ;

2. wiped out or captured hundreds of US airmen including many of colonel rank ;

3. shot ablaze 3 US warships.

This is the biggest gain of our army and people and the heaviest setback of the US imperialists in their air war against the North of our country.

Obviously, the indomitability of our army and people and the invincible strength of our people's war has completely thwarted US attempt to subdue our people with its B-52s. Never before did the US strategic and tactical air forces sustain so heavy losses within such a short period of time.

The desperate fury of the US imperialists has not only failed to intimidate our people but on the contrary have fanned up our anger and steeled our unbreakable will to fight to a finish for the safeguard and building of the socialist North, liberation of the South and reunification of the country, and together with the peoples of Laos and Cambodia to drive the US imperialists out of the Indochinese peninsula.

The US imperialists have themselves unmasked their odious nature as aggressors and bloodthirsty war maniacs. They have come under strong protest and condemnation from the whole progressive mankind.

The High Command of the Viet Nam People's Army warmly congratulates our army's various arms and services : the regular army, the regional army, the People's Armed Security Forces, the militia and home-guards, and the people of all localities in North Viet Nam who remained of one mind and co-operated closely, fought with great efficiency and dramatic success, their minds set on defeating the US imperialist aggressors.

The armed forces and people of Hanoi have distinguished themselves with very outstanding exploits, topping the scoreboard of US planes including B-52 strategic bombers grounded and deserving to be the heroic capital of the whole country.

The armed forces and people of Haiphong, upholding their tradition of "loyalty, heroism and determination to win," have courageously defended the port city, fought brilliantly and fruitfully.

Our missile units have shown exceptional bravery, intelligence and creativeness, accomplished repeated feats, achieved very high combat efficiency, shot down on the spot many B-52 planes and proved equal to their title of Heroic Armed Service.

Our young Air Force, constantly displaying great initiative in action, has attacked the enemy with high resolve, and has devised many effective tactical methods and downed several B-52s.

The anti-aircraft artillery, making the most of its fire power of different ranges and calibres, has closely coordinated with the other arms and services and overpowered the enemy air force.

The radar units, constantly on the look and in combat readiness, have kept a keen eye on the enemy movements and supplied timely information to combat forces, thereby effectively helping them to resist victoriously.

The other branches of our armed forces and all the support units have also courageously overcome difficulties, striven with high dedication to meet the requirement of the command of all levels and of various army units, thereby doing a due share in the common victory.

The militia and home-guards giving full scope to the power of the infantry weaponry and small artillery, have brought down one F-111, the most up-to-date type of aircraft of the US Air Force. Together with the people of various localities they quickly and neatly captured US pilots and co-operated with the people's security forces in maintaining law and order and rapidly doing away with the aftermath of the enemy raids.

Despite their humiliating failure in this new war escalation, the US imperialists remain very stubborn and reckless. They are perpetrating more war crimes against our people. But the deeper they plunge into their military adventures, the more bitter their reverses and the more certain their total defeat will be.

More than ever before, let our army and people throughout North Viet Nam keep engraved in their hearts the heinous crimes of the US aggressors, give full play to their heroism, stiffen their resolve to frustrate the enemy's frantic war acts, defeat completely the current air war as well as all other military adventures of the US, wholeheartedly fulfil their obligation to the kindred South and their noble international duty and together with the army and people throughout the country persist in, and step up, the anti-US resistance till complete victory.

Let the AA forces and the Air Force and all arms and services : the regular army, the regional army, the people's security armed forces, the militia and homeguards, harden further their determination to fight and to win, keep the initiative of action, fight courageously, intelligently and imaginatively, master the modern military technique, achieve the closest combat co-ordination among themselves, make full use of the factors of secrecy and surprise and strengthen their solidarity in order to achieve still bigger feats, bring into full play our strength and strike harder at the US air and naval forces, inflict on them still heavier losses, give an effective protection to our beloved capital city and port city, the air space and territorial waters of the socialist North, bastion of the revolution in the whole country.

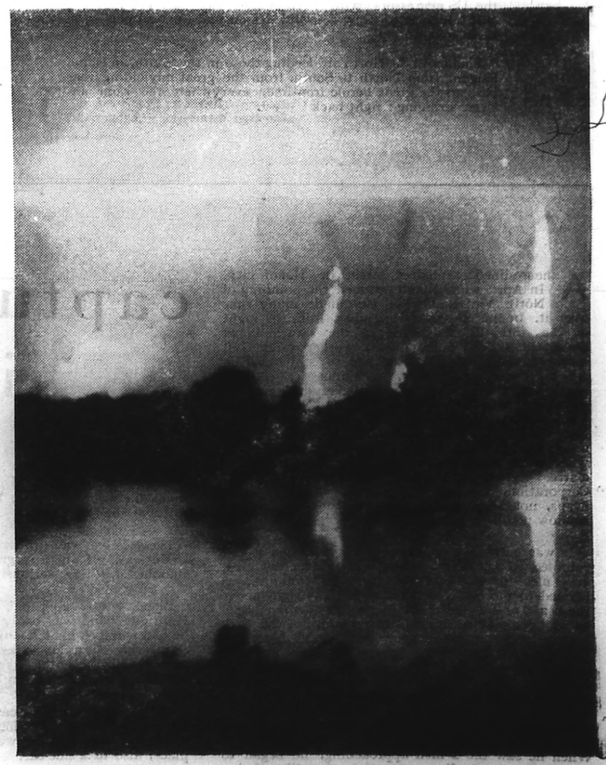
All officers and men of the people's armed forces !

We have shown unmistakable good will, but the US imperialists have answered with treachery and arrogance.

We want peace, but the US imperialists are stepping up the war. They have insolently encroached upon the sovereignty, and security of our homeland.

But no brutal force can bring the heroic Vietnamese people to their knees.

Bearing in mind the supreme message of the Great President Ho Chi Minh, fighting for the independence, freedom, and reunification of our Motherland, accomplishing our noble international obligation, we are resolved to carry on until final victory.



U S B-52 shot ablazed over Hanoi on Dec. 27

Letter

FROM SAIGON TO HANOI

SINCE the night of December 18 when the US aggressors launched their blitz against North Viet Nam especially with B-52 strikes at Hanoi, many people in Saigon-Gia Dinh area had lost sleep.

Because of their burning hatred for the enemy and implacable anger at their savagery.

Because of their national feeling bubbling over in their hearts, because of their mounting pride in the undauntedness, staunchness, heroism of the Vietnamese in face of the hardest ever trial.

Because of their immense joy at and confidence in the bright future of the revolution.

Everybody was pondering on what to do as his share in the punishment of the US aggressors and their agents. The Saigon-Gia Dinh people had realized the nature of US imperialism and its placemen. Therefore no one was surprised at its crimes.

The more serious their losses, weakening and isolation, the greater bad faith and treacherousness Nixon and his confederates show, the more heinous crimes they commit and the more forcefully they egg on their running dogs to brutalize our fellow-countrymen. However, this will only aggravate their predicament and estrangement from the masses.

With unquestionable goodwill, our people have provided the US aggressors with a reasonable way out. Yet they are still reluctant to draw a useful lesson and instead persist in their adventure.

Flames in the North are feeding those in the South, in Hanoi Saigon, from North to South, from the great unyielding rear base to the great heroic frontline, everywhere the same answer is ringing : fight back !

Flames have seared B-52 stratoforts ; they have engulfed the Thanh Tuy Ha bomb stores. the Tan Son Nhut air-base, the Long Binh logistic compound and the Nha Be oil tank. They have besieged and wiped out Saigon troops, and burned out big chunks of the US-Thieu "Vietnamization." The flames of anger and militancy of the Saigon-Gia Dinh people, the flames of our fighting armed forces and people in both zones of Viet Nam are rising higher and higher. They are the best reply to Nixon and Co.

The US aggressors now are at the end of their tether. They are striking out in all directions but can in no way escape their final doom.

With their diplomatic deviousness and their criminal war escalation, they are testing our strength. But it will be labour lost.

Although the Saigon-Gia Dinh people are put to ruthless terror, repression, exploitation and oppression by the US-paid Nguyen Van Thieu clique, the aggressors and the traitors will be disappointed if they hope to find in their eyes, as in those of the rest of the Vietnamese, the slightest trace of fatigue or fear. This people, who for generations have not submitted to any aggressor, are possessed of a will stronger than steel. They are capable of standing up to any trial.

Are the frantic effort of US air power and the ruthless terror, repression and exploitation of the Thieu clique likely to save them from failure ?

The answer is in the negative, as proved by facts.

The recourse to an old ineffective remedy is suicidal to the aggressors.

More than ever, the Saigon-Gia Dinh people are turning towards Hanoi with boundless revolutionary optimism.

To translate their inexorable hatred and anger against the US-Thieu clique into positive and resolute revolutionary deeds, is their fondest wish. That is the best way they have opted for in their exertion to put an early end to all the disasters and tragedies wreaked on them by the US-Thieu clique, and bring nearer the day when the two cities bound by sworn brotherhood come under the same roof.

They are building up and developing their force, stepping up their fight against military draft, taxation, terror and repression and for better living conditions and democratic liberties, step by step regaining control of their hamlets, pressing for an end to the US aggression, for peace and national concord, winning over members of the Saigon army, police and administration to the people's side, and driving the US-Thieu clique into utter isolation. By performing these practical, immediate and pressing tasks, they are joining the Hanoians and other fellow citizens in the entire country in the fight against the US aggressors until victory.

capturing B-52 fliers in Hanoi streets

A house-lined, asphalted street in Hanoi city. In April when Nixon resumed the bombing of North Viet Nam, F-4 jets made many runs over it. In this month of December, from the night of the 18th, B-52's joined in the saturnalia of devastation. Some inhabitants, workers and civil servants resident in the area had to stay on. Life was tense in many respects, but courage was the key note. They tried to keep their everyday activity going normally. Dang Van De and Nguyen Van Van were two of them. De, 36, was a father of 5, his friend Van, 34, a father of 2. Both had been assigned the task of guarding a construction site where they were working. It was a stone quarry at a street corner, run by the Hanoi Building Material Corporation. The assets consisted simply of some heaps, not very high, of broken stone and a tiny, shallow pond.

It was past 10 p.m., December 26, when B-52's rumbled in again and rained bombs over the area, very close to this place. At 10.45, a stratofort was blasted to pieces by a SAM in the sky right above the heads of De and Van. As the city's siren began to wail the all-clear signal, in the midst of the dark night, the 2 men heard something splash down into the pond water. They sprang to their feet and within seconds they were already at the edge of the pond. Since they saw the destruction of the B-52 in the air they had been expecting something to occur. There was now in the middle of the pond an American. He was sitting waist-deep in the water, groping for his way out with his hands. When he saw the 2 men approaching, he began to groan. At a small construction site like theirs, guards are issued only K-44 rifles. De fixed his bayonet and jumped into the pond. He held his weapon in his right hand and with his left hand he grabbed the downed airman's by the chest. At about the same time, his feet hit the parachute and outfit of the sky pirate...

The captive was driven to a military barrack in a side-car. "I am a sergeant flying in a B-52," he stammered, "I am seriously hurt..."

Blood was oozing out from his many injuries. His right hand was badly burnt by the SAM and he had sprained his left ankle. Blood soaked his wet flying suit and nylon socks. He shut his eyes while our news photographers and TV correspondents zeroed in their cameras on him.

He was given first aid care and an anti-shock shot, then moved to a detention camp. A moment later, another downed pilot was brought to the same place, also in a side-car.

"I am a flight lieutenant, and a B-52 co-pilot. My aircraft was hit by your SAM before it could drop its bombload. Scared out of my wits, I was the first to eject..."

The man looked less shabby than the other. His flying suit remained dry. His ruddy complexion and brown hair glowed under the electric lights. He suffered only a wound in his left arm. He joined both hands in supplication. All along the way from suburban village B. where he was captured by our militia and homeguards to this city street, he did not cease thanking our men for having spared his life.

The whole city again turned out to prepare for a new battle, ready to inflicting further punishment on the sky raiders. Side-cars continued their runs through the deserted streets. Tonight, captured US fliers were led to their detention camp, all by asphalted streets. The guards at the camp automatically opened the gate each time they saw a side-car approaching. The captured airmen, their hands clasped in humility on their chest, moved deep into the lit-up waiting back-yard.

editorial

Our resolve grows in proportion to our successes

OUR people have begun the new year in exultation. Our resistance against US aggression, for national salvation has gone through a year of gruelling ordeals but also of tremendous, comprehensive and strategically significant successes.

In the past year, the South Vietnamese people and armed forces were able, against overwhelming odds, to foil "Vietnamization" and inflicted an initial reverse on the "re-Americanization" of the war. Nearly half a million enemy was wiped out; 8 divisions, 35 regiments, multi-battalion units, and combat groups, hundreds of battalions of regulars, thousands of companies and platoons of security, civilian guard outfits were knocked out or depleted; the bulk of the "people's self-defence" force disbanded; a considerable amount of adverse war equipment destroyed or seized, including 11,000 military vehicles, 1,500 guns, 45,000 weapons of various denominations; 2,500 planes downed or wrecked, 400 boats and combat launches sunk and 650 war material and fuel dumps burned out. Many of the most solid defence lines in various strategic areas were shattered, extensive territories occupied with more than 5 million people liberated.

The waves of large-scale offensives started on March 30, 1972 proved more devastating than ever for the adversary, whose counter-attacks were stopped short and whose forces were tightly encirled, widely scattered and most alarmingly bogged down. All the Liberation forces ceaselessly grew and showed their capability of doing short work of many enemy division- and regiment-size units at a time and of frustrating US naval and air support given with the most searing firing power. Simultaneously, the local people's continual and violent uprisings swept away big masses of "strategic hamlets," posts and garrisons, and important contingents of adverse coercive forces, thereby rocking to its foundation the Saigon "pacification" program, the cornerstone of its "Vietnamization." The whole of US-Saigon battle array was thoroughly upset.

The North Vietnamese people and armed forces' withering riposte to Nixon's B-52 strategic onsets on Hanoi, Haiphong and other cities supplied an example of fine fighting coordination and effective assistance to our own effort here in the South. Not only did the flow of aid from the North keep streaming down in time, but its staying power also diverted part of the US furious fire and contributed to the whole country's splendid feats of arms.

Our people's achievements filled our friends in the five continents with great elation, while we drew much inspiration from such propitious developments as: admission of the RSVN PRG as a full member to the 64 non-aligned nation Goergetown Conference, the mounting "support-Viet Nam" movement in the world, progressive mankind's sense of outrage at the US President's most recent atrocities against the Northern part of our land, which have aggravated US isolation and the weakness of its case not only in Viet Nam but even in the world.

AFTER the failure of its war of aggression, waged with 700,000 US and satellite troops, which had forced the US to pull out its soldiery, its "Vietnamization" by means of most vicious methods sustained serious setbacks and was nearing its doom. It had then to "re-Americanize" the war, again to no avail. Its most formidable weapon, the B-52's, got swated down like flies over Hanoi, in other places in the North and in the South of our country. Never was the US air supremacy, particularly the image of its strategic airforce at such a humiliatingly low ebb as in the past twelvemonth.

The tougher the trial, the higher our people's revolutionary mettle is, the more bitter their hatred for the enemy, the stronger their resolve to resist and defeat US aggression. The signal exploits of our revolutionary heroism in 1972 have brought about a radical change to the balance of forces on the battlefield in our favour and to the disadvantage of our opponent. The strength of our winning position has been increased and our offensive posture made firmer, while the other side's fruitless effort has been rendered more futile by its graver loss of the initiative. The brightest prospects have been opened up for our undertaking.

"Gold purity is best assayed by fire, man's strength by adversity," goes one of our proverbs. The rain of enemy bombs, the hail of their bullets cannot prevent us from carrying the day. The stubbornness, brutality, craftiness and bad faith of US imperialism cannot intimidate us and weaken our sense of purpose in our fight for independence and freedom. No doubt, no aggressor, be the most affluent, the most powerful, the most truculent and the most fiendish of all imperialisms, like the US, can cow the brave Vietnamese people. The big stick policy of the Nixon gang of fire-eaters has gone from one setback to another. Their double-dealing and bad faith in international and diplomatic relations has only brought upon them universal condemnation and will speed up their failure in every respect.

THE Vietnamese have peace deeply at heart and are fully prepared to conclude a negotiated settlement but the peace they are after is a peace not shadowed by the presence of any US aggressor and free from the ruthless rule of US hireling, traitors to the country. A fair solution must be founded on the respect for the Vietnamese people's fundamental national rights and for the South Vietnamese people's right to self-determination. The latter are possessed of enough resolve and combat strength to secure what they are entitled to. Their resistance has experienced success after success and its trend is toward more substantial gains. No hardship can impede our nation's irresistible advance. Let US imperialism make no mistake about our mood: if it persists in its trigger-happy obduracy and attempt to drag out the war and maintain its neo-colonialist regime in South Viet Nam, the South Vietnamese people and armed forces will, together with their Northern kindred, carry on the battle for as many years as necessary until the South is liberated, socialism is preserved and achieved in the North, and peace and unity is realized all over the country. They will continue the effort they are sharing with the Cambodian and Lao people until the whole Indochinese peninsula is free.

SOUTH VIET NAM

Coordinating with their North Kindred, SVN PLAF pursue the enemy in an impetus of victory

50th founding anniversary of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (Dec. 30, 1922 — Dec. 30, 1972)

an epoch-making event in the life of nations

TOGETHER with the Soviet people and all progressive mankind, the South Vietnamese are celebrating the 50th founding anniversary of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Half a century ago, on December 30, 1922, plenipotentiary representatives of the Russian Federative Republic, Ukrain, Bielorussia and Transcaucasia held a historic meeting in Moscow to discuss and approve a declaration and a treaty on the founding of the Soviet Union. In his opening speech, the dean of representatives, P.G. Smidovitch, said :

"Up to now, our States are like separated armies on the same front. We all fight for the power of labour, the power of the Soviets against the united front of imperialist governments ; we build socialist economy against aggressive capital. What tremendous capacity of resistance we draw from this union of republics against every danger that threatens us...

This new level of union among Soviet republics is the source of fresh and huge capacity of resistance, of fresh and tremendous creative forces : It is terrific and incomprehensible for the capitalist world, but it surprises, rejoices and appeals to workers of all lands.

The emergence of the Soviet Union was a meaningful victory of the multi-national people of the Soviet Union after the great October Revolution and also a momentous gain of the labouring people and oppressed nations throughout the world in their fight for peace, national independence, democracy and social progress. It is a remarkable achievement of the sound policy on nationalities of the first people's State in the world.

Prior to that, for centuries the Russian Empire had been an immense prison for the various nations living in this part of the globe. Thanks to the judicious policy referred to above, more than one hundred nations with differing habits and customs and degrees of economic, cultural and social development had for good got rid of all forms of exploitation and lived together in new relations made of equality and solidarity and mutual help with a view to their common progress, like a great family of brotherly nations, thereby setting an unprecedented example in the history of mankind. That is the best model of relations between nations ever forged by oppressed peoples throughout the world.

Thanks to such an unshakable unity between nations within a multinational and federative state, the Soviet people, in the past half-a-century, have been able to foil all acts of intervention and aggression by the most ferocious imperialist countries and to make astonishing advances in all fields.

Twenty-five years after the founding of their State, the Soviet people, with the strength of their monolithic unity, remarkably beat off the atrocious onslaughts of the German-Italian-Japanese fascist alliance. This feat not only safeguarded their socialist homeland, but also helped shatter the dream of world domination nurtured by fascism, and made it possible for the peoples of many European, Asian and Latin American countries to rise up and stage their own revolution. It was achieved not only thanks to the military might, but also the economic-social system of the Soviet Union and the Socialist unity bounding various nations within the Soviet Union which had been tempered through long fighting periods.

Closely united on the basis of equality and friendship between nations, the Soviet people have made steady strides in construction and turned the Soviet Union — composed of Russia and other backward countries — into a strong power endowed with modern industry, higly mechanized agriculture, efficient national defence and advanced culture and science. Before the October Revolution, Russia came only fourth in Europe as an industrial nation ; now the Soviet Union ranks first in Europe and second in the world. Such an unusual advance surpasses all imagination. Within half a century, including the years of devastating wars and of after-war rehabilitation, the national income of the Soviet Union went up 100 times, electricity output 1,000 times, steel 400 times, cement 700 times, oil 90 times, coal 60 times, etc. (in 1922 the Soviet Union was incapable of producing motorcars, tractors and machine-tools, but at present it turns out every year more than one million cars, and nearly half-a-million tractors). In many advanced branches of modern science and technique, including physics, chemistry, electronics, cybernetics, space science, etc., she has scored brilliant successes and is taking the lead in many fields of world's sciences.

Magnificent progress has also been recorded in culture and education. If before revolution 72 per cent of the Russians were illiterate, at present 65 per cent of the total population in the Soviet Union had had University and secondary education. Expectation of life from only 32 years, has now been extended to over 70.

Many backward nations within the Soviet Union have bypassed the stage of capitalist development : overcoming their centuries-long backwardness, they have caught up with the advanced stage of economic and cultural development of the whole Soviet Union. A comparison between the states of five Asian Soviet socialist republics and what they used to be is most enlightening : before revolution the peoples of Uzbefkistan, Turkmenistan, Tadjikistan, Kazakhstan and Kirghizistan were illiterate in their quasi-totality. Today not only has illiteracy been completely eradicated, but 104 universities and colleges with 560,000 students are functioning, and at the end of 1971 they had 70,000 researchers including, 1,400 doctors and 19,300 "candidates in sciences." Each republic has its own academy with 300 academicians and corresponding members.

Developing to the full their extraordinary achievements of the past half-a-century, the multi-national people of the Soviet Union are endeavouring to fulfil their 9th five-year plan (1971-1975) approved by the 24th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, with a view to driving forward the laying of material and technical foundations of communism and the strengthening of the Soviet Union and the whole socialist camp.

THE South Vietnamese are following with particular gratification the momentous and splendid achievements of the Soviet people in all domains.

We are for ever bound to the Soviet people by the most affectionate ties of militant friendship. In our sacred anti-US patriotic resistance, we have always enjoyed the warm sympathy and strong support of the Soviet Party, Government and people. The 24th Congress of the CPSU meeting in March 1971 pointed out : "The Soviet Union has supported and helped the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam in every respect and will continue to do so in her socialist construction, strengthening of national defence and foiling of US aggression ; now as before, it is associated with the liberation movement in South Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia, which is making an outstanding contribution to the cause of peace and national independence throughout the world."

On November 13, 1972, face to US double-dealing, L. Brezhnev, Secretary-General of the Central Committee of the CPSU, declared : "The whole world is now focussing its attention on the peaceful settlement of the Viet Nam problem. The world's peoples demand the removal of all hurdles laid by the USA to the signing of a peace agreement, and the earliest cessation of the war against the peace-loving people of Viet Nam. The Soviet Union and other socialist countries will actively uphold the just cause of Vietnamese patriots engaged in the fight against US aggression."

The Soviet people have repeatedly expressed their deep sympathy and powerful support to the anti-US patriotic resistance of our people by concrete and multifarous activities, including demonstrations, rallies, exhibitions, film shows on Viet Nam, fund-raising campaigns, blood donation, etc. Ebullient Weeks and Months of Solidarity with Viet Nam are organized every year and have become a Soviet symbol of solidarity with our people.

In celebrating the 50th founding anniversary of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, from the front-line of anti-imperialist combat, the South Vietnamese address their warmest greetings to the Soviet people. We sincerely wish them new and more substantial advances in their building of a new society, which will contribute to the strengthening of the socialist system and revolutionary forces fighting against imperialism throughout the world. May the brotherly friendship and unshakable solidarity between the Vietnamese and Soviet peoples last for ever !

Money collection for Bach Mai Hospital's rebuilding

ACCORDING to *UPI*, on January 1st, a group of well-known Americans including former Attorney-General R. Clark and many prominent churchmen launched a collection of three million dollars for the rebuilding of the Bach Mai Hospital destroyed by US bombs on Christmas eve.

250,000 dollars were contributed at once.

Among the sponsors are the Medical Aid to Indochina Organization headquatered in Boston and the Emergency Relief Fund for the building of a new Bach Mai Hospital.

The Medical Aid to Indochina Organization has made clear in a statement that the aim of its action is to show to the world "our discontent at our (US) Government's acts."

100 foreign priests volunteer to brave US bombs in Hanoi

"THE Conference called by the World Council of Churches in Bangkok on January 1st," *AFP* reported, "considered sending 100 well-known priests to Hanoi to carry out the "mission to and the bombing." As proposed by Van Der Veen (Holland), they are to stand in the open in Hanoi if the US resumes the bombardments of North Viet Nam.

Though the bombings have been ceased North of the 20th parallel upward, Van Der Veen said, they can be renewed. He called on the World Council of Churches to go farther than mere statements against US raids on North Viet Nam.

For the 13th anniversary of the founding of the Republic of Cuba

a blazing torch of freedom in the Western Hemisphere

THE Cuban people can rightly pride themselves on the remarkable achievements scored since the founding, 13 years ago, of their young Republic, which is held in affection and admiration by millions of freedom-lovers and progressives throughout the world. They had to fight against overwhelming odds, immediately after the overthrow of Batista's dictatorship, to preserve and consolidate this land of freedom, the first of its kind in Latin America. Relying on the single-mindedness and monolithic unity of the people and the lucid and firm leadership of the Communist Party and the Revolutionary Government headed by Fidel Castro, Cuba has foiled all US attempts at subversion, intervention and direct aggression: the Playa Giron victory was the most vivid illustration of her courage. Despite the blockade of the North American imperialists, the Cubans have achieved continual economic and cultural successes and done away with the state of backwardness inherited from dependence upon foreign countries and from the system of *latifundia*.

Embarked on the road to socialism, Cuba had been building her own new industry, modernizing existing structures and at the same time setting up new ones. Chemical industry and light engineering are being established, a further step in the modernization of sugar and oil refinery is being completed, and a new industrial complex for the production of nickel — a rich mineral resource of Cuba — set up. Cuba is investigating her potential in oil, natural gas, and hydro-electricity. Her staple industry is at present sugar-refinery which consists of 150 factories with a total 10 million tons per year.

Cuban agriculture has undergone a radical change compared with the pre-revolution period. All key holdings have become the property of the people. In the course of the land reform, 1,200,000 hectares, the acreage of 600 sugar plantations belonging to US monopoly capital and 900,000 hectares of 2,500 private estates have been nationalized. Private farms formerly specialized in sugar-cane planting and animal husbandry have been put under direct State management to be operated by mechanized means, which leads to a lowering of production costs. A country wide network of hydraulic installations has taken shape.

These initial — but significant — gains have surpassed the imagination of even the most sanguine observers. The US imperialists' economic blockade has lamentably failed. As Fidel Castro has rightly pointed out, in the past the United States had not even to resort to armed aggression. It had only to stop purchasing Cuba's sugar and selling oil to her to cause the collapse of her economy. But, after revolution, the Cubans were resolved to surmount all hardships, build up a sovereign economy and lay the necessary foundations for the preservation of her independence and national dignity. Thanks to the valuable aid from socialist countries, the heroic people of Cuba have stood up to all pressure from the North American imperialistic circles, and now, in defiance of US blackmail and threats, many a capitalist country has established trade relations with Cuba.

In culture and education, the Cubans have rapidly eradicated illiteracy and are making big strides in science and technique to the great benefit of national construction.

All these advances cannot be separated either from the sagacious leadership of the Cuban government and of Fidel Castro, the widely respected national leader, or from the countless sacrifices by a whole people determined to safeguard their independence and freedom. Said Fidel: "The number one problem of Cuban revolution is to survive the US blockade, invasions by mercenaries, and US subversion and threats of aggression. This has compelled us to devote a major part of our resources to the defense of our revolution, because our country is a small one which is next door to the United States, on the same side of the Atlantic... Our workers, peasants, students are possessed of a magnificient revolutionary spirit. Imperialist ideology would find no breach to creep through into our people's minds. Revolutionary ideas will instead catch the imagination of the peoples of Latin America and exert even their influence upon the North American society" (Speech at Katowich, June 7, 1972).

THE South Vietnamese feel gratified at every success of the brotherly people of Cuba either in their resistance to US intervention and aggression, or in their economic and cultural construction, as at their own. We highly appreciate the sympathy and unconditional support granted by the Cubans to our anti-US patriotic resistance. As Fidel Castro once said, "for Viet Nam, we (the Cuban people) are ready to offer even our blood."

The South Vietnamese, in their gruelling fight against the savage aggression of the US imperialists, will never forget such heartfelt words.

"Imperialism has never fought such unjust and immoral war. Reversely, no war is more just than the one waged by the Vietnamese. Moreover, Viet Nam has set the first example of heroism in our time. Millions of Vietnamese have died for their cause. The Vietnamese have stood US bombings with an unbelievable fortitude."

We have derived from such comments, and from so many other tokens of Viet Nam-Cuba militant friendship inexhaustible encouragement for our effort against US imperialism, the common enemy of our two peoples.

On this festive day of the Cubans, we convey to them our warmest greetings and wishes for new and more signal successes. May the friendship between our two peoples ever flourish!

here and there

Hell let loose on Hanoi

How Nixon was happy as Christmas was nearing! First he had been able to undermine the draft accord on ceasing the war and restoring peace in Viet Nam, to the signing of which he had committed himself by deception to gain electoral advantages. Then through his spokesman Kissinger, he had shifted at a press conference on December 16, the responsibility onto North Viet Nam for the breakdown of the peace talks. Finally and chiefly, he had contrived something very... very unusual, colossal, formidable, which would crown everything and take the world completely unawares, and supply an unmistakable indication of his megalomania. It had always been haunting him and he would have no peace of mind until it was translated into reality.

So, in a festive mood, he made preparations for a trip with his wife and daughters to Florida to spend Christmas at the "Western White House." Everything had been carefully planned, discussed and licked into shape.

And on D day and at H hour (actually December 18 at 19.15) hell was let loose with the greatest US air force ever deployed in hundreds of B.52 strikes on Hanoi, Haiphong and all North Viet Nam, day and night and mostly at night with superfortresses of the latest model, the nec plus ultra of strategic weapons.

Now, we should see whether Hanoi would persist in rejecting US terms. It would serve it right to dare confront such a superpower as the US!

An initial progress report

And the juggernaut rolled on. Soon Hanoi and Haiphong got used to a nocturnal din consisting not only of the roar of planes and explosions of bombs but also of AA guns and all kinds of firearms' clattering fire at US air pirates.

The summary balance-sheet of the 12 days (from December 18 to 29) of this Yankee steam roller game shows some interesting data:

Every day the US fielded

— from 500 to 700 tactical jets (mostly in raids on Hanoi and Haiphong),

— from 130 to 150 B.52 (out of 200 based in South-east Asia) in carpet bombings of Hanoi and Haiphong,

— and 6,000 to 7,000 tons of bombs (mostly on the DRVN capital and principal port).

So in 12 days 100,000 tons of bombs nearly all of which were dropped on our two biggest cities, releasing a quantity of destructive energy equal to 5 Hiroshima-type A bombs.

US losses amounted to:

— 81 planes including 34 B.52's, 5 F.111's, 27 tactical jets, 11 aircraft of the Navy, 3 drones and 1 jumbo chopper.

Hanoi alone downed 23 B.52's many of which crashed on the spot.

Hundreds of pilots were wiped out or captured, from company to field rank. "Some 76 Americans have been lost over North Viet Nam and presumably captured," reported *UPI* on December 31,1972. Four others are known dead and two others wounded. The agency described the raids as "the heaviest of the Viet Nam war" and "the most costly for American men and equipment."

Reuter predicted on December 12 that if the war went on at the same rate, the US would shortly have all its B.52' grounded.

As for the objective of the US in the undertaking *AFP* held on December 30 that one should not underestimate the intelligence collected which said that the "psychological effect" on Hanoi and Haiphong had not been achieved.

Universal outcry

Of course, Mr Nixon had not expected such results, otherwise he would not have had taken such a costly risk.

Another development which came as a surprise to him was the universal uproar which expressed the sense of shock of humanity, the widespread condemnation of nearly all the governments and of all the peoples of the world. According to an incomplete review, up to December 26 only, a host of party and state leaders of the socialist countries, eight Chiefs of state, three presidents, seven prime ministers, nine foreign ministers, many communist and progressive parties, democratic organizations, progressive personalities of all political and ideological inclinations in the five continents had raised their voices. In addition there had been many mass demonstrations against US bombing in many countries.

Is this a case in which the facts of life, the sterling quality of the true man, dastardliness of those who have nothing human but their face about them, are beyond the capacity of expression of the human language? The strong words of protest addressed by President Idi Amin to the US President are still not strong enough to tell all the earth's feeling of horror at the latter's behaviour.

Tokyo's paper *Akahata* wrote on December 26 that Joan Baez visiting the devastated Kham Thien street had to cover her face with her veil and that her whole body was shaken by sobs. Obviously, the paper added, there was no bombing mistake possible. The Americans have blotted out a one and a quarter mile long and a quarter mile wide street. Apparently Joan Baez could not bear the sight of such a striking horror.

HUONG NAM

UNIVERSAL CONDEMNATION OF NIXON'S NEW ESCALATION

THE Nixon administration's bad faith in connection with the agreement on ending the war and restoring peace in Viet Nam, commitment of a large number of aircraft and warships including nearly all its B-52s in Southeast Asia to round-the-clock extermination raids on unprecedented scale and fury from December 18 last on many populous areas in Hanoi, Haiphong and several provinces in North Viet Nam including a prison for US airmen, many foreign embassies and ships, has triggered a wave of indignation throughout the world.

Angry shouts "Nixon, the murderer!" "Stop at once the bombing and terror!" of millions of people, denunciations and condemnations of the US by governments, heads of states, diplomatic circles, MP's and progressives the world over have been heard in all continents even in countries which had not till then raised their voices opposing US aggression against Viet Nam. Their list is long: Britain, France, Belgium, Holland, Austria, Switzerland, Yugoslavia, Iceland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland, West Germany, West Berlin, GDR, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Soviet Union, Albania, Mongolia, China, KDPR, Japan, Hongkong, Bangla Desh, India, Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Algeria, People's Democratic Yemen, People's Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea, Uganda, Canada, Cuba, Chile, Guyana, Panama, Australia, New Zealand... In the US itself, popular feeling ran high. Mingled with the widespread outcries, there was the protest of several international and regional organizations and the world progressive press, especially French and British papers. Even Pope Paul VI and UN Secretary General Waldheim could not remain silent before such horrors which made "Christ shed tears" (1).

The US Information Service in Bangla Desh was smashed, billets at US military bases in West Germany were burned down, dockers refused to unload goods from US ships in Italy, Australia and right in the USA, US flags were hoisted upside down while RSVN flags were flown high in several mass demonstrations.

Reuter reported on December 23 that anti-US drives had erupted in all parts of the world after the US resumed the bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong.

In the United States, right after Nixon ordered massive air-raids on the DRVN, a demonstration blocked a railway leading to a factory in York (Pennsylvania) producing bombs for the Viet Nam war, and on the following days the protest campaign quickly spread to Washington, New York, San Francisco, Cleveland, Los Angeles... and in front of the headquarters of the US delegation to the UNO. The marchers displayed slogans reading "Stop at once the bombings and strafings!", "Down with Thieu quisling regime!", "Stop deceiving!" Many well-known senators such as McGovern, M. Mansfield, W. Fulbright, E. Kennedy, E. Muskie, and dozens of other congressmen many of them Republicans like D. Riegle, J. Jayits..., several leaders of TU and religious organizations strongly criticized Nixon's deceiving the American people and creating an illusion about peace in Viet Nam and urged that he immediately end the war.

US and world public opinion described US bombardments as so loathsome crimes that no legal or moral grounds can justify them (D. Riegle), as an act of folly (P. McCloskey), a base and horrible deed and another ruthless trick of the Nixon administration (TU of Hospital Employees in New York). The resumption of the bombing of North Viet Nam shows the deliberate bad faith of the US President. Obviously, the raids are completely wanton. The words we are sending you (Nixon) can hardly describe the feeling of disgust that we in Uganda feel at your barbarity unparalleled in human history (Message of Uganda's President to Nixon). These air-strikes violated the principles of international law, the most fundamental principles of human rights and at the same time disclosed to world public the US scheme and double-dealing attitude at the Paris Conference on Viet Nam (National Assembly of the Arab Republic of Egypt). The US intensified aggressive war this time has raised extremely serious difficulties to the fair settlement of the Viet Nam issue, brought the situation in Viet Nam and Indochina to a more dangerous stage. It is an attempt to provoke a de facto failure of the negotiations, compel the Vietnamese to accept US "peace" with the "policy of the position of strength," brazenly preserve at all costs the Thieu quisling administration. It also means an encroachment upon the right to self-determination of the Vietnamese and other peoples in Indochina, indefinite prolongation of US aggression and intervention in this region (Communist Party of Japan). It is crystal clear that Nixon and his government wanted to use bombs and shells and other means of mass extermination against women, children and old-agers, to get peace on their own terms. They wanted to bring the people in North and South (Viet Nam) to their knees (WFDW). "In escalating the aggressive war, Nixon administration has vainly attempted to intimidate the Vietnamese and negotiate from a position of strength. It has sought to achieve at the conference table what it could not get on the battlefield. But the Vietnamese as well as the world peoples including the Americans, have clearly realized the US dark design and will never be duped. Whatever the quantity of bombs the US imperialists may drop, they can never bend the Vietnamese people's iron will. On the contrary, the latter's determination to resist US aggression will further strengthen. Despite their war escalation and crimes, the US imperialists will surely be defeated" (Afro-Asian Journalists' Association).

And the obvious results of the resumed US bombing throughout North Viet Nam are that, just as US Communist Party Secretary-General Gus Hall has said, US credit in the world has dropped to the lowest ever level (*UPI*, December 28).

NHU NAM

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(1) *Watchword of a group of Japanese demonstrating in front of the US Embassy in Tokyo on December 25, 1972.*

Nixon's goodwill for peace!

A West German burns to death in protest against Nixon

According to *UPI*, on the night of December 31, 1972, at "Freedom" Park in Djakarta, Capital of Indonesia, a West German called Strai Frank doused himself with gasoline and burned himself to death in protest against Nixon's barbarous bombings in Viet Nam. Beside the protester's corpse was found a letter reading: "For the victims of US bombings in Viet Nam. The hopeless life in a world without affection will end insignificantly. I leave all my belongings to the victims of the US atrocious bombings in Viet Nam."

According to the Djakarta West German Embassy's Spokesman, Strai Frank was a computer technician who had been living in Hongkong for two years and had just come to Indochina at Christmas.

90 Canadians offer to come to Viet Nam to rebuild US-devastated places

According to *AP*, a group of 90 Canadian Korean war veterans have volunteered to come to North Viet Nam to contribute to the rebuilding of schools, hospitals and houses destroyed by US bombs.

Earlier, they said they would return to the provincial governor of Manitoba their Korean war badges in protest against the US savage bombardments in North Viet Nam. They urged diplomatic circles to help them fulfil their wish.

Non-aligned countries condemn US bombing of North Viet Nam

More than 40 non-aligned, countries at the United Nations January 3 issued a communiqué which said:

"The non-aligned countries condemn without any qualifications the unprecedentedly massive, indiscriminate and savage bombing of North Viet Nam by the United States forces which is designed to intimidate the people of North Viet Nam and impose a settlement on the Vietnamese people.

Such bombings have shocked the entire civilized world and surpassed in their brutality anything mankind has ever known."

The communiqué said the bombings were "in complete violation of the fundamental principles of the UN charter and the rules of international law", "could only jeopardize the attainment of a speedy and peaceful solution of the Viet Nam problem."

Sweden and Denmark donate aids to Viet Nam

According to a report from Copenhagen, the Danish Government decided at an extraordinary session on January 1st to present the people of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam with 5 million kroners (equivalent to 700,000 US dollars) as aid to the victims of the recent atrocious US bombings against Hanoi and Haiphong.

At the same time, the International Development Agency of Sweden has announced its aid worth 70 million kronors for the reconstruction of two hospitals in Viet Nam.